

The last time John Moore, of the University of Luton, appeared in these pages was with "Shifting Frontiers: Mapping Cyberpunk and the American South" (no. 66, Spring 1996). We are very happy to announce that this article was awarded the SFRA's Pioneer Award, given annually for the best critical article in the field. Peter Nicholls, former editor of Foundation, accepted on behalf of the author at the joint SFRA and Eaton Conference on the Queen Mary (Long Beach, CA) in June 1997. Congratulations, John!

Miracle Stalker: Personal and Social Transformation in Arkady and Boris Strugatsky's *Roadside Picnic*

John Moore

Sigmund Freud's identification of the unconscious facilitated the mapping and analysis of the subconscious mind. But the historical origins and social functions of the unconscious remain veiled in psychoanalysis. Jacques Camatte tears back this veil when he poses the rhetorical question:

What is the subconscious if not the affective-sensual life of the human being repressed by capital? The human being has to be domesticated, shaped to a rationality which he [*sic*] must internalize – the rationality of the process of production of capital. Once this domestication is achieved, the human being is dispossessed of this repressed sensual life which becomes an object of knowledge, of science; it becomes capitalizable. The unconscious, becoming an object of commerce, is thinly sliced and retailed in the market of knowledge. The unconscious did not always exist, and it exists now only as a component in the discourse of capital.¹

The unconscious could only be "discovered" after it had been brought into existence by the development of capitalism. Camatte sketches the historical emergence of the unconscious, situates it as an element within the discourse of capital, and indicates how it operates as a means both of social control and profit accumulation. The division of cognitive processes into conscious and unconscious echoes but also reinforces the division of labour upon which capitalism is predicated. The production of an unconscious thus results in a